IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly replace the claims of record with the following full set of claims:

1. (Currently amended)   A multiple access communication system comprising at least one primary station and a plurality of secondary stations the primary station and the secondary stations being interconnected via a network, the secondary stations being arranged for transmitting, to the primary station, return signals in a part of a return signal frequency band dedicated for transmission to the primary station containing relatively little noise, the secondary stations being further arranged for transmitting the return signals in a first part of the return signal frequency band containing relatively little noise, wherein the network comprises:

means for mapping a first set of the return signals of the plurality of secondary stations onto the first portion of the return signal frequency band and

means for mapping said first set of return signals in said low noise part of the return signal frequency band onto [[a]] the whole of the return signal frequency band.

2. (Cancelled)   .

3. (Currently amended) A multiple access communication system according to Claim 1, wherein the part of the return signal frequency band is an upper part of the return signal frequency channel band

the means for mapping the return signals comprising a down converter for down converting the frequency of at least one of the return signals.

4. (Cancelled) .

5. (Previously presented)   A multiple access communication system according to Claim 1, wherein the network comprises a coaxial cable network.

6. (Previously presented)   A multiple access communication system according to Claim 1, wherein the network comprises a hybrid fiber/coax network.

7. (New)   The multiple access communication system according to claim 1, wherein

the means for mapping the return signals comprises a down converter for down

converting the frequency of at least one of the return signals.

8. (New)   The multiple access communication system according to Claim 7, wherein

the down converter comprises a block down converter